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FROM
A QUIET GARDEN

BY

MAY PRESTON GLOSSON

These poems by my mother
for my friend Bennett Weaver.

Preston Slosson

1946.



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FROM
A QUIET GARDEN

LYRICS IN PROSE AND VERSE

BY

MAY PRESTON SLOSSON

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NEW YORK
BRENTANO'S
PUBLISHERS

TO MY HUSBAND
AND
MY SON

THE GARDEN

They had drawn very near each other, altho twenty years lay between them. Both were tall and strong and beautiful, tho in the eyes of one Hope smiled, and in the eyes of the other Memory brooded. The Woman spoke softly to the girl: "Will you walk in my garden?" And the girl knew she had received the highest honor.

They entered the garden thru a low gate about which morning-glories twined. And the girl smiled at the flowers all about her, for they were the frank favorites of childhood. They grew in her own garden.

As they passed on they reached paths flecked with doubtful sunshine, wandering among tall lilies like white dreams, and the girl looked at her companion sisterwise, for it was all like her own garden.

But they strayed on into a band of rose-hued light athwart the path. Red roses were all around them, climbing over sweet arbors, flinging sprays of vivid color to the very top of the garden wall, which had suddenly grown high, shutting them into a secret place of glowing crimson and rich fragrance, as tho they had paused in the very heart of a rose. Red petals fluttered about their feet. The girl blushed, for she knew the meaning of the riot of roses. Still she did not speak, for the spell of silence lay upon the ruby close.

Then came they into a sweeter place still, where the flower beds were little and low and fringed with the feathery plant known as "Baby's Breath," and the girl spoke not for reverence of the place. At last they stood by such a little bed covered with white violets, and their breath was faint and sweet. The girl spoke at last. "How could you bear it?" And again, in a sort of passion: "How can one ever bear it?" The woman said: "It must be borne!"

But the girl's tears dropped fast upon the bed of violets and rebellion filled her heart for a grief she had not known. "How came the violets here?" "They did not grow at first. The ground was raw and red like a wound—but they came—at last—one by one—dear little memories and tender thoughts until the bed was covered as you see."

Peace filled the troubled heart of the girl. She lifted her head and both faced the western wall of the garden. Against it flamed the rich colors of autumn foliage, asters and golden-rod gleamed among the purpling grass, their faces glowed in the sunset light. The woman spoke softly:

"The garden is not quite finished. There are new flowers to be planted at the end, rue and rosemary and heart's ease. I have shown you all that Innocence, Love and Grief have planted, but there are more beds to be made by hands unseen. But I do not fear them."

And the garden was very sweet as the twilight fell.

LITTLE BROTHER

Playing in the city street,
 Little Brother!
Running errands with swift feet;
Passing me with footsteps fleet;
Ought we not to know each other—
 Little Brother?

Care comes early at our call—
 Little Brother!
Far too heavy burdens fall
On your shoulders, slight and small,
Would that I could lift them all,
 Little Brother!

In the world's relentless mart,
 Little Brother!
Each must bear his manly part,
Earn his bread with toil and smart—
But your courage breaks my heart,
 Little Brother!

Surely there are, unconfessed,
 Little Brother!
Longings in your boyish breast?
Teach me how to help you best—
How we each may help the other—
 Little Brother!

TROVE

We do not "make" our friends—we find them
only,

Where they have waited for us weary years;
Some day we wander forth a little lonely
When lo! a comrade at our side appears.

'Tis not "discovery"—'tis recognition,
A glance, a greeting, and we grasp the hand.
No explanation needed—no condition—
That we are friends at once we understand.

And if our paths divide—if we must sever—
Eyes turn away, and clinging hands must part—
It matters not, for we are friends forever.
Distance may darken, but not hush the heart.

We serve them out of eager love—not duty.
And none so safe as he whom love defends!
The tender words of Christ assume new beauty:
"Henceforth not servants—I have called you
friends!"

THE LITTLE HAND

I know a little velvet palm
Pink as rose-petals, softly curled,
Or sea-shell tints of sunsets calm—
Prettiest hand in all the world!

And tiny fingers curl and cling
About my own with pressure dear,
As a wee bird, with downy wing
Flutters, till it forgets to fear.

Oh, mother! mother! gently hold
The little hand that rests in yours,
Care not o'ermuch for place or gold
Love is the one thing that endures.

Resolve to make the young heart light
With pleasures pure and happy song
What joy to lead in ways of right—
What anguish to have led in wrong!

The baby hand with perfect trust
Is placed in yours to be controlled;
Love must be brave, and wise, and just—
These dimpled hands the future hold!

MY LITTLE BOY

The other children grow so tall!
I would not wish it otherwise,
And yet—we mothers lose them all,
They grow to Men before our eyes—
My little, little boys!

But he, who slipped away in Spring,
Six summers on his shining head,
His baby eyes still wondering,
He only, tho long years have sped,
Is still my little boy.

SONG

A little bird sat on a snowy bough
And shook a song from his silver throat
So full of summer one would avow
June sunlight quivered in every note!

And as singing he fluttered far away
Leaving melodious memories,
Brightness and beauty denied the day,
Blossomed instead on the barren trees.

Dwelling amid the snows too long
Earth's glad music we may forget,
Till some little bird sings: "A land of song,
And of sunshine, somewhere, lingers yet!"

THE SUM OF HAPPINESS

I

A little room—a lonely place—
In cheerless order, dull and dun;
It lacks a single touch of grace—
A table set for one!

II

A tiny house—a cheerful fire—
And everything so bright and new;
All that a glad heart could desire:
A table set for two!

III

A little house brimful of noise,
Disorderly as it can be—
Chairs upside down and scattered toys;
A table set for three!

WITHERED DREAMS

The lilies-of-the-valley in my vase
Have faded to a shadowy bouquet;
Each perfect, pallid petal keeps its grace—
Ghost-flowers are they.

The fairy carillons of fragrant bells,
Love's bridal-bells that swing so merrily,
No longer ring; their silver music dwells
In muted memory.

KANSAS

Wide the horizon and wide the skies,
Limitless leagues of prairie melt
Into haze, as azure as baby's eyes.

Afar in the distance a sapphire belt,
Call it cestus of Venus, or what you will,
Everywhere beauty that wakes a thrill!

Draw a long breath of vivid air.

Drink your fill of the prairie's wine
Colored with sunlight, flavored rare
With the fragrance of flowers. See the shine
And glitter of dew-drops on every hand,
And own your love for our Western land!

The meadow-lark sings his cheery song
Bold and clear as a trumpet's call;
Butterflies hover, a radiant throng,
Above blossoms as bright; and over all
The sky smiles ever, without a trace
Of a frowning cloud upon its face.

Let us try a race with the breeze!

He has stopped to whisper to the grass
Some pretty secret told by the bees

In a hurried murmur as they pass
Hastening to orchards, pink and white,
Ablush with bloom in their young delight!

Let us be happy—the world is so!

Let the blood flow with jubilant rush
Thru our veins, and health and vigor glow
In the cheeks that for very gladness flush.
Let us not believe that the earth is old—
She is young! And ours is the Age of Gold!

THE NATION'S BURDEN

Against the background grim of sullen strife
Floats a pure pennon with its cross of peace;
It speaks of love—not hate—not death—but life;
It promises the dreamed-of day when war shall
cease,

When none shall write of custom, race or creed,
Manhood itself shall hold mankind in awe,
Each nation's only burden others' need
And sympathy shall hold the silken bonds of
law.

When man—white, black or red, or what you will,
Will read upon that flag which floats above:
“Bear ye one another's burdens”—thus fulfil
The law of Christ; the love of law—the law of
love!

1917.

BON VOYAGE

O stars, beam kindly on my lad
A-sailing on the sea,
Thru happy nights serene and glad
Guiding him back to me.
O sea winds, sweetly, softly blow
Across a quiet sea
To kiss his cheek and whisper low
A little word from me.
Impatient tides, that pace the strand,
O wide and sundering sea,
A pathway make from that far land,
Leading him home to me.
1918.

TWO CATHEDRALS

St. John the Divine and Notre Dame de Rheims

I watch the patient masons in the sun
Building a House to God upon the hill
That overhangs the city; just begun
The toil of years—the care—the loving skill.

Another minster lifted arch and spire
By patient builders wrought in futile trust.
The Iron Eagle dropt a plume of fire—
And all its beauty is a heap of dust!
1914.

MOTHER-EYES

About the busy city, to and fro,
On myriad errands many women go.
And I, who watch them, think I've learned to know
The brooding look of love in mother-eyes.
(It may be memory has made me wise.)

Under a cloud of slowly silvering hair
They look from tired faces worn with care;
Or under youthful foreheads smooth and fair;
And everywhere the stranger child replies
With answering smile 'to love in mother-eyes.

Sometimes the tender mother-eyes are filled
With wistful memories, and sorrow stilled
By patient years; or, hope and longing build
A rainbow bridge across the clouded skies
Reflected in the depths of mother-eyes.

Sometimes, the happy mother-eyes confess
A waiting group at home, as they caress
All little children with their tenderness;
And every hope of all the nations lies
In that unmeasured love in mother-eyes!

THE CHRIST CHILD

We mothers are so happy who have had
Sweet baby faces pressed against our own
And loving little arms around us thrown
While clinging, rosy fingers made us glad!

We are so happy that a little while
The merry music of their dancing feet
Made life a song of praise for gift so sweet,
The tender sunlight of a baby's smile!

We could not keep them! Chary of caress,
To manhood's measure some of them have grown,
Children no longer. Some of them have flown
Into the land so still and answerless.

Yet we are happy to have held the gold
Of precious hours and days that could not last.
No loss can take from us the perfect Past!
We have them yet in memory's firm hold.

And so we mothers do not need the fine,
Sweet lesson of the Babe of Bethlehem;
Our children taught us when we looked at them
That life and babyhood are both divine!

ACROSS THE WAY

Across the way there was sunshine; whether
We walked thru clear or thru cloudy weather
The loveliest cherub cheered each day—
Till we learned to look, when skies were gray,
For the baby-blossom across the way.

When disheartened over our daily labor,
What a comfort was our little neighbor!
For the glimpse of beauty ours each day,
A debt that love alone could repay,
We owed the baby across the way.

But to-night our hearts are full of sorrow
As we sadly think that on the morrow
No beautiful face will brighten our day.
O vanished rosebud! No words can say
How we miss the baby across the way.

The light is darkened, and we are lonely,
And our guests are Grief and Longing only.
“O Father in Heaven, grant,” we pray,
“In thy many mansions some future day
We may find our baby across the way!”

“REFUSING TO BE COMFORTED”

“Time cureth grief?” Ah, mentor, what is time?
So many revolutions ’round the sun—
So many circling seasons—have mere years
Such power then? To make memory a crime?
Forbid the bitter-sweet relief of tears?
Unclasp the clinging fingers one by one
That press a dead joy to an empty heart?
“Time cureth grief?” Must we then part
O Grief, old comrade? From my past
I have lost all else—must I lose thee at last?

STAR-LIGHT

Two clear gray eyes shine on me thru the mist
Of many months and years that roll between;
Still lingers on my life their light serene
And sweet, by calm thoughts into quiet kissed.
Twin planets of my destiny
May I not fail or fall!
Yet of those eyes that smile on me
A memory is all!

Forever vanished is the fair young face
Wherein I used to look with longing love;
But, as when stars are blotted out above
Their ling’ring light long undulates thru space
And shines on sleeping worlds below—
My star-light still doth fall
Upon my heart, a silver glow,
A memory—yet all!
Sept. 1897.

TO THE FUTURE

O mystic eyes, we may not see,
Unknown veiled face!
Our hopes, our dreams are all of thee
And give thee grace.

Dear thy dreamed image to our heart,
Is thoughtful brows,
Sweet mouth whose closed lips never part
For spoken vows.

Eloquent silence! more than speech
It moves the soul:
No open books such lessons teach
As thy shut scroll.

O deep, sad eyes! our sorrows are
Your unshed tears:
O strange, sweet smile! auspicious star
Of happy years;

Only the ante-room of fate
The wide world seems
Where men thy royal message wait,
Dread Queen of Dreams!

LIFE LIES BEFORE US

Golden the glory of childhood's sweet vision
When the young heart, o'errunning with gladness,
Knows nothing of sorrow, of gloom, or of sadness.
Existence is joy and life looks Elysian,
As bright as the blue bending tenderly o'er us,
Filling our souls with a sense of pure pleasure—
Our very hearts beat to a jubilant measure—
For life lies before us!

And then manhood's cares and questions come
 thronging,
"Of what value these beautiful visions you're
 weaving?
What have you accomplished, what are you achiev-
 ing?"

Thus the voice of ambition fills us with longing.
We listen to labor's deep, answering chorus
Among the world's workers, its destinies sharing,
We find our enjoyment in doing and daring
Since life lies before us.

And when we shall reach the mystical river
That sweeps onward ever, resistless, unswerving,
Its purpose divine unceasingly serving,
On the dark verge evening shadows will shiver,
Red banners of sunset will undulate o'er us.
But Faith will behold beyond the wave lying
The City Immortal and rapture undying,
Still, life lies before us!

ABOVE THE CLOUDS

O brothers! toiling bravely to the height
Of aspiration for the good of man—
How often since your weary march began
Have those far lustrous summits lost their light?

For veiling vapors float up from below;
Misapprehension wraps us like a cloud,
Its clammy, clinging folds our souls enshroud
Till hope grows faint; we almost fear to go

Along the upward path by chasms deep
Gashed in the mighty mountain's wounded side;
The wooing voices whisper in the wide
Mysterious silence, while our spirits sleep:

“Remain!” the voices of the valley sing.
“Thou canst not reach them, lonely, cold and far,
Unattainable by man those summits are;
Come down into the sunny warmth of Spring!”

And yet, my brothers, when the breath of God
Blows far away the cruel curtaining cloud,
What rapture to forget the captious crowd
Whose hands would drag us downward to the sod!

Green looks the valley? It may well be so!
Its rich, dark soil for many thousand years
Has been well watered with man's blood and tears.
From sorrow's soil our common comforts grow.

Above the clouds, above the clouds, O friends!
Courage, true hearts! look upward to the height!
Who would forsake that pure and lovely light
That glows from Heaven where the long path
ends?

PEACE

I read it in the violets' blue eyes
This strange, new lesson mine to learn,
And study it from silent, starry skies
Whose calm rebukes ambitious thoughts that
burn
The soul itself with their consuming fires.
All vain regrets and passionate desires
Are silenced by the influence serene
Of woods, and waves, and wandering winds that
bring
The first sweet fragrance, hostage of the Spring,
Sent from her islands green.
“Why blot out the bright earth with bitter tears?
Transform them into rainbows with a smile.
Or soon or late the dearest friends must part.”
So comes a quiet voice across the years—
And speaks its peace to my impatient heart.

THE CITY OF SIN

Down the street of the plague-stricken city
In shuddering horror I fled
Too frightened to linger for pity
Of the dying who sobbed o'er the dead—
O'er the festering piles of the dead!

Bloated faces turned upward to heaven
From a writhing and twisted heap
Of souls dying alone—unforgiven
By the ghastly corpses asleep—
Where none but the cruel could sleep.

On the hand of what once was a woman
Gleamed a jewel of rarest device.
At the hest of some fiend inhuman
I snatched it—the finger was ice!
Blue, clammy and horrible ice.

And then I rushed forth from the portal,
I drank the pure air of the plain.
In that instant an agony mortal
Wrung my heart till I raved in my pain.
I was tortured and maddened with pain.

Death had lurked in the heart of the jewel,
Its beauty had cost me too dear!
On my anguish it shone cold and cruel,
Its light withered all loveliness sear.
Made Gethsemane's olive-trees sear!

Oh, flee in mad haste from the city!
Your feet spurn its pavement accursed!
Let no bauble, no beauty, no pity,
Stay your wild flight—so frantic at first!
Wear no jewel a corpse has worn first!

A NEW LIBATION

The soul that only cares to please
Itself, in sweet, indulgent ease,
At last must learn the lesson stern:
Our deeds become our Nemeses.

An act, once done, no power recalls;
Our hearts the force of Fate appalls;
We may forget, may hope—but yet
The tree must lie where'er it falls.

All honor to the young soul, when
Its eager sympathy—again
A gift divine—the heart's rich wine
Is poured out to the needs of men,

A new libation! Love (release
For fettered lives) bids sorrow cease;
The famished feeds; and lo! our deeds
Are white-winged messengers of Peace!

UNDER SEALED ORDERS

An American Red Cross nurse serving in France told me that her contract read: "From an unknown port to an unknown port."

"From Port Unknown to Unknown Port"
Were her mysterious orders
As she crept from the shelter of the fort
That watches her country's borders.

She carried the Red Cross of love
To stricken brothers fallen for France,
That flag all other flags above
Knows no retreat! It must advance!

The woman's task, the human task,
To bind the wounds of ruthless strife;
What loftier mission could she ask
Than her old work of serving Life?

The Life, that, like the Red Cross ships,
Into uncharted seas has passed,—
From an unknown port each spirit slips
And seeks an unknown port—at last!

THE CUP

The Cup was beautiful, quaintly and curiously wrought with figures of gleeful baby Loves, moulded of rosy gold with half-extended wings, as tho they had lighted on the brim a moment before to sip of its nectar. An old, old Cup of rare design and dearer because old and rich of service to many generations of men and maidens fair as she.

The untasted liquid seemed fathomless as she gazed down into it, deep as all the longing that had looked from the brooding eyes of those who had passed it on from hand to hand, from lip to lip, from one generation to another. There were red gleams of fire and of roses, greens and blues that shimmered into each other in the shifting hues of a dove's soft breast; the purple of ripe grapes; the yellow of sunlight in the heart of a water-lily; the gray-blue bloom of a plum under a passing shadow; the white flash of tears falling upon marble; the joy-light of eyes that had wept themselves bright again.

The maiden stood among the meadow drifts of daisies; all about her the sound of wings; of low soft notes; of the whisper of gossiping grasses.

A shaft of sunlight touched her shining hair, slid down the rounded arm, trembled on the rose-leaf palm curved about the handle of the Cup and

quivered in the restless liquid, disclosing strange, vivid colors unnamed as yet. Was the draught cordial or poison?

She lifted the dread Cup and drank to the Giver.

NOVA VITA

In a new and wonderful world I live
As dewy and fresh as Paradise
Where half open rosebuds shyly give
Modest blushes beneath my eyes.

From this happy home I shall ne'er depart,
But dwell for aye 'neath the sunny skies,
My world is a little maid's loving heart,
And my heaven her azure eyes!

A FABLE

I know an enchanted garden,
Where a wondrous blossom grows,
A slender and silver lily
That can change itself to a rose!

My heart is the magic garden—
Dare I its secrets disclose?
For you, my love, are the lily
Till your blushes make you a rose!

HEART'S EASE

They brought me roses, darling,
Roses with hearts aflame—
And stealing thru fevered visions
A sense of sweetness came.

In the dim and curtained chamber
Roses glowed thru the gloom,
Radiant censers showering
Rich fragrance in the room.

But I did not care for their beauty,
Impatiently turned away—
They only filled me with longing
To see the sweet June day.

Then you came, bright as the morning—
Did you divine my need?
With your perfect, purple pansies
You brought Heart's Ease indeed!

A THEFT

Once a sweet rose-bud
Smiled in the sun,
Roses around her
Ope'd one by one;

Shyly she looked up
The green leaves thru
And held in her heart
A pearl of dew.

With flattering words
The sun began:
"Fair one, oh, hide not
Thy heart from man!"

But as bright petals
Slowly uncurl
See! The sly rogue has
Stolen her pearl!

INLAND

All sights and sounds speak of thee, my Beloved;
And since I learned you are beside the sea
The mighty Mother ministers to me,
Leaving my foolish fancies unproved
Like silent sentinels in duty grooved.
The stately columns of the cottonwood
All day in perfect quietude have stood,
But suddenly the shining leaves are moved
To murmuring music; the young winds awake
Over the bending fields of billowy grass
Dotted with daisies that a foam-crest make
For the green waves; the "prairie schooners" pass
Like sun-lit sails; and as I watch their motion
I dream with thee, Dear, by the distant ocean!

A BROWNIE

Oh, Humming-bird may flit in the sun,
A rose-hued life on a rainbow wing,
Blue-bird and Red-breast when winter's done
May give glad welcome to maiden-spring;
But a little brown bird's the bird I sing—
Russet-robbed darling!

Oh, bonny blue eyes the poets praise ;
And eyes that seem like a thought of night ;
And deep gray eyes with their clear, calm gaze ;
Where courage and gentleness unite,
But a pair of brown eyes are my delight,
My brown-eyed beauty !

Oh, golden tresses are fair to see
Showering sunshine everywhere ;
And duskier ringlets falling free ;
And amber locks that the Sirens wear ;
But the best of all do I love brown hair,
My brown-haired beauty !

Oh! sweet little girl in dress of brown,
With face like a snow-drop, pure and pale,
'Mong russet leaves that have fluttered down
From oak above it that braves the gale.
"My favorite color?" Till life shall fail
Is brown, dear Brownie !

.

"How doth the little busy bee !"
Sang Grace, sweet girl, as she crossed over
To where I whetted my shining scythe
In the fragrant fields of clover.
A kiss I stole from her smiling lips—
What a frown was hers to see !
"Haven't I right to sip honey?" I said,
"If I'm a bee?"

IN SOME FAR LAND

In some far land there groweth
Among the grasses lowly
A plant arising slowly
Whose flowers no mortal knoweth!

It will go on, unfolding,
Its leaves and buds of beauty,
Some subtle sense of duty
Its blossoms still withholding.

But some sweet day, unknowing
That kindly fates are leading
My drowsy heart unheeding
To where the flower is growing.

I shall secure its sweetness
That for my footstep waited!
And those bright buds belated
I'll kiss into completeness.

In all its opening glory
I'll claim the beauteous blossom
To wear upon my bosom—
What! You're laughing at my story?

But Blue Eyes smiling under
My gaze, its fire unknowing,
How do you know what's growing
"In some far land," I wonder?

RETRIBUTION

I found a fair flower
By the wayside smiling;
Its cheeks covered o'er
By blushes beguiling.

I passed on, nor knew
The love I was losing;
For when I returned
'Twas too late for choosing!

Finding none fairer,
My fate never fearing,
I came back to find
Another 'twas cheering!

A PARABLE

Out of the darkness and the storm
A sudden plunge against the pane;
The room within looks safe and warm,
Sure shelter from the wind and rain,
The bird, bewildered, strives in vain.

And so, I muse, it fares with me.
I meet reserve so crystal clear
That, like the bird, I can not see
The barrier between us, dear,
And vainly strive to come more near!

WASTED

My heart was a rose,
Rose red and rose sweet,
And somebody knows
At whose dainty feet
I laid this fresh rose!

My heart is a rose,
But faded, down flung,
No longer it grows
My life's thorns among,
Rejected, my rose!

SIGNAL SERVICE

(Weather Report)

A chill of winter is in the air,
The leafless forest withered and bare
 Bleak hilltops crowning;
The heavens above are gray and cold
And tarnished the sunshine's tender gold.
 (Somebody's frowning!)

Warm winds of summer softly blow—
In velvet verdure the glad trees grow.
 The sky's beguiling
The bright lake below, a mirror true,
Into azure answering its blue—
 (Somebody's smiling!)

(Indications)

You who would walk in the land of love,
No matter how blue the skies above,
Look for sudden changes of weather!

And one very advisable plan
Is to take an overcoat and—fan.
You may need them both together!

CONFESSION

There is a face whose moods I know—
A faintly-tinted, flower-like thing,
Pale, till some sudden thought doth bring
A sunset light across the snow!
Ah, modest maiden heart that speaks
Its sweet surprise, in crimson cheeks!

And I think as I watch the fading flush
“What can be prettier than a blush?”

Yet bonnier still are deep blue eyes;
Or when, again, her eyes are hid
By lovely blue-veined, fallen lid—
And her troubled bosom stirs with sighs
Its filmy lace; and one pure pearl
Jewels the cheek of my sweet girl—

I am very sure (since it proves me dear)
There's nothing so beautiful as a tear!

INTENTIONS

“I’ve firmly, boys, made up my mind
That when I marry,
The girl I choose shall be a kind
Of kitchen-fairy.

“A saint, of course, in soul and looks,
(Tho men are sinners),
But she must be a saint who cooks
Delicious dinners!

“Beauty and brains—and I’ll not mind
Sage conversations;
But one thing I’ll expect to find—
Regular rations!”

The maiden fair said thru her tears,
“With these perfections
Steak-cooking somewhat interferes;
It spoils complexions!

“You want an angel, do you say,
For your housekeeping?
I fear wings would be in the way
When she was sweeping!”

FAREWELL!

And so you leave me? Love, the world was
wide—

I did not crave your coming—made no sign—
Why did you enter, then, this heart of mine
If, entering, you did not choose abide?

A humble home, I know, but all your own
Keeping you safe and warm. Ambition calls
You to be master of far loftier halls,
And so you go? and leave me, Love, alone?

Well—leave me! cross the threshold—nor return.
I will not stay your going with regret,
But to my lonely life a lesson set—
Endurance, not forgetfulness, to learn.

But as friend gives to friend some keepsake when
They're parting, so I pray you leave me this—
Merely this hope—that if you ever miss
A shelter elsewhere, you'll come home again.

THE SKEPTIC

Unhappy he who doubts the love divine,
Since human love, its sweet interpreter,
He cannot comprehend—but will aver
He tastes but bitterness in life's rich wine!
Night's gloom alone he marks—yet, the stars shine
Like sinless eyes of angels; and the stir
Of sleepy winds brings fragrance sweet as myrrh
From clover fields; he catches not the fine
Hushed sounds of night; the soft and drowsy notes
From wind-rocked cradles in the trembling trees;
Only the chill he feels, the shadow sees!
“Be bold for right!” rings from the brazen throats
As trumpets blow to battle—but no thrill
Breaks his soul's trance or nerves his palsied will.

THE DOUBTER

Did ever a murdered Faith
Stabbed to the heart by unbelief—
In unavailing grief
Safely sepulchered—come back like a ghostly
wraith?

Does it ever return to the heart,
Eagerly seek an entrance there
Where crouches black despair,
Hearing the sound outside with a guilty start?

A fair dream that I can't forget
Was murdered long years ago
And buried beneath the snow,
But a pallid shade of joy haunts my sad heart yet!

Wisdom you promised me
O Doubt! and is this the truth?
You whispered to ardent youth
"Come, O slave of creeds! and the Truth shall set
you free!"

Is this the end of the years
Full of passionate struggle and strife?
Nothing left longer in life
Worth the living—save the dead dreams of youth
—and these tears!

In this empty house o' my heart
The echoing rooms grow cold;
Wan ghost of my dream of old,
Enter and wander at will! for we must not part!

SPOON RIVER REVIEWED

No. I don't like your Spoon River Anthology,
Lee Master's long line of too loquacious corpses
Lying their length in a quiet country churchyard—
Who lift their hideous heads from their decaying
pillows

And address a few remarks to the world in gen-
eral.

I tell you those people aren't dead to begin with!
They haven't the pulseless calm of immortality.
Then, I don't like the way they talk to each other;
When they talk to me I bitterly resent it;
To be frank, I don't like their society,
Dead or alive they are equally detestable.

Where are the good people buried in that grave-
yard?

There must have, a lot of them, lived in Spoon
River—

Grey warriors of the Lord—

Children like flowers—

Boys and girls with their eyes full of visions—

Mothers who were sweet and calm and sensible.

Perhaps they are in Heaven, and these earth-
bound spirits

Lingering around and watching their own corrup-
tion,

Coiling like rattlesnakes around their own head-
stones,
Are all that are left in Spoon River graveyard.
Then I don't like it because it isn't poetry,
Nor metrical prose, nor anything musical,
All of its cadences are humpy like the graveyard!
He tried to be a Whitman with a touch of Rabe-
lais;
But Whitman sometimes has a mighty music
Like the roar of the sea (or the thunder of the
Elevated).
Reminding us at times of his own Wild Trump-
eter.
Oh, how I dread a set of Spoon Rivers!
A lot of little Whitmans without any music,
A herd of Rabelaises without any genius
Spoiling white paper and mussing up the uni-
verse . . .
It gives one a taste for annihilation!

“VERWEILE DOCH, DU BIST SO SCHÖN”

Gaily we wander—Life and I—
Over green fields in sweet spring weather.
Each hour like a bright-winged butterfly
Flits away while we walk together
Yet we wish them briefer, Life and I.

Slowly we saunter—Life and I—
Among the roses, summer's treasure.
The golden moments are gliding by
So sweetly laden with love and pleasure
We linger a little, Life and I.

Swiftly we hasten—Life and I—
'Mid scarlet and gold of autumn's strewing
From our eager grasp the seconds fly
Like trembling leaves when the wind is blowing—
We must leave our labor, Life and I.

Weary we wander, Life and I,
Thru a cold, white world in winter weather.
Slowly and sadly the days creep by.
Too tired, at last, to walk together
We wish the road shorter, Life and I.

Oh, when did either Life or I
Long for an instant to last forever?
Not here! But in Heaven hearts will sigh
From each sweet moment loth to sever:
"Stay! We find thee fairest, Life and I!"

AVENGED

Love lit my door one day;
My heart, filled full of cares,
Heedlessly turned away
"An angel unawares."

Soon came regret, and then
Too late, "Return" I wept,
But when love came again
Weary with waiting slept.

I woke with beating heart
To find the dear guest flown—
And now I dwell apart
In a still house alone!

THE NIGHT COURT FOR WOMEN

O Court of Justice, justly named the Night!
Where shuddering shapes of want and sin
With pallid faces—hands too white—
Like evil dreams flit out and in.

Yet these, these also, He the Sinless swept
Into His inmost sphere of living light;
Forgiving much to her who knelt and wept:
“Go, sin no more,” sad Daughters of the Night!

THE SEARCH

I walk thru city streets but nowhere see
The face beloved I ne'er may see again.
These human hives, the haunts of many men,
Are full of faces—Love, I look for thee.

Sometimes I catch a glimpse of golden hair,
Of deep-blue eyes and sea-shell tinted cheek
And for a moment think the face I seek
Is found; but soon I sigh: “’Tis very fair—
But, ah, the noble spirit shines not there!”

Thru life I wander on alone, my Love;
And shall I never, never, see thee more?
The tireless wave breaks ever on the shore,
The ceaseless planets circle on above,
And so my thoughts forever round thee move!

ENDYMION TO DIANA

How strange to find myself no more my own.
My very thoughts which I deemed mine indeed
Are thine, and my commands no longer heed;
So swiftly to such height my love has grown
That never for a moment's space alone
My onward steps a shadowy shape attends
A vision—yet more real to me than friends
Who press my hand and look into my face
And, seeing change, wistfully seek to trace
Its unknown cause; but stranger yet to know
Tho should I never see thee more, most dear,
One hour thou didst not leave me! Linger near,
O loveliest of dreams! If thou must go
Wait till I wake to find Hope's fair fruition here!

SONG

Love, let us linger in this garden of roses,
While the young sunbeams awake them to blushes,
Listening long to the sweet notes of thrushes,
While the buds open, the heart too uncloses.

Love, let us linger!

Love, let us hasten! Down the pink petals flutter,
Hear the low rustle of dead leaves! The dying,
Faint, far-away songs of birds Southward flying!
Drear to the heart is the message they utter.

Love, let us hasten!

THE MEASURE OF MEDIOCRITY

Oh, the tragedy that lies
Right before unthinking eyes
 In some dull, plebeian face!
Oh, the sorrow and the longing
Of sad souls that we are wronging
 With the charge of: "Commonplace!"

Oh, the victories unknown,
In some soul that fights alone,
 Fearing its endeavor vain!
Ah, repenting, let us render
Homage to the true and tender
 Hearts that beat beneath the "jean"!

If thy blind eyes will not see—
Hear the voice that speaks to thee:
 "Let him serve who would be wise!"
Lest, before us humbly kneeling,
Servant's eyes should lift, revealing,
 Christ our King—in lowly guise!

THE SEARCH

Like a child longing for the Father's face
I sought my Maker's will in Nature's laws,
But Nature chilled my heart with cheerless grace
And Science saddened with a cold First Cause.

The history of our hope I read again
The record of the well-beloved Son:
What answer to our longing made He, when
He walked in Palestine, the Perfect One?

"Blessed the pure in heart," I read,
"For they shall see God." Sweet rebuke and
wise!
No wonder that we find Him not, I said,
Light's self is darkness to sin-blinded eyes.

Our Father! number us with those
Redeemed by Christ—whose spirits shall unfold
Pure petals of the radiant white rose
That Dante dreamed of—God its heart of
gold!

PLATTE CAÑON

What atoms we are in these vast calm places—
In such splendid spaciousness of sky
Thru cloven cañons the river races
Restless with rocks that its temper try.

What atoms we are with our puny passion
Our little lives lost in futile fear—
Bacterian struggles for wealth and fashion,
Unworthy the tribute of a tear!

The grand rebuke of the forest stills us,
The river laughs at our sordid care,
The rosy calm of the sunset fills us
With bliss of beauty and pain of prayer.

Secure is the heart that can hold this splendor,
Reaching yearning arms as wide as Heaven,
Folding the whole race in love as tender
As pure and deep as a soul forgiven.

Grand are the giant mountain faces;
Bright the flash of the sunlit spray;
The forest is full of myriad graces;
But one human soul is more than they!

And so we return to nobler living,
Gentler judgment of our brother Man,
Generous sympathy, golden giving;
We are part, at least, of a perfect plan.

“Atoms” are we? Not so, save in choosing
The less, and passing the greater by,
Reckless of worlds we may be losing!
A drop may mirror the infinite sky!

A WINTER WALK

“See Winter’s flag of truce unfurl!
He wears his jewels like a king—
The sky a sapphire, earth a pearl
In sunshine set!”—that sort of thing.
“You’ll take my arm? It’s icy here.”
“Thanks, no; I never slip,” she said,
Just then she felt—sensation queer—
The glassy sidewalk hit her head.

The horizontal she’d assumed;
And as he helped her to her feet
Upon whose steadiness she’d plumed
Herself, he said: “Revenge is sweet!”
Upon the proffered ulster sleeve
She meekly laid her snowy hand:
“‘In slippery places,’ I believe,
The Bible says, ‘The wicked—stand!’”

LOVE'S MEMORY

Surely, Love, you can't forget
Your first gift? A violet
Dewy, purple petals wet
With your tears? I have it yet.

Ah, those sweet repentant tears!
How they sparkle thru the years!
And each passing day endears
The memory which chides my fears.

Long my suit you had denied—
Still I lingered at your side;
In my pain, Love, did I chide?
Forgive me that your tears replied!

Ah, remember! Do not let
Our fair star of friendship set;
A stern rebuke my anger met
In a blue-eyed violet!

Filled with tears it seemed to be
Like the one you gave to me—
Only that's o'erarched, you see,
By a rainbow memory!

In life's anxious care and fret
'Tis but human to forget—
Ah, forgive and love me yet!
I'm vanquished by a violet!

THE CUP OF LOVE

What is the draught thou bringest me
O Love, with beseeching radiant eyes?
If I drink at thy wish shall I be wise?
I look at the cup's carved tracery,
Its graceful shape and its rich, red hues—
From thy hand it were not hard to choose.

And yet, I know not why, I fear
To lift to my quivering lips the brim
Lest its iridescent lights grow dim.
Will it be as lovely—seen too near?
Will the draught be bitter or sweet when spent?
Bring me bliss or poison my calm content?

Old is the cup, and of rare design
Quaintly and curiously wrought,
Product of many a poet's thought—
Holds it heart's-blood or fragrant wine?
Cordial or poison, Love? Eagerly
I lift the dread cup and drink to thee!

IN SILENTIO

"A rose is the emblem of silence."

Close the book—the leaves of love
We so gladly turned together
'Mid the golden, glowing heather
Tinged by sunset hues above.

Softly as a petal's fall
Place a rose between the pages;
No gay reader ever gauges
The deep anguish under all.

Let no moan escape our lips
Sternly closed. This is no illness,
Love is dead! Hark! thru the stillness
Drop by drop the life-blood drips.

Without speech, then, let us part.
Not a word to friend or lover.
Leave the dead—the chill face cover,
Lay a rose upon her heart!

AFTER MANY DAYS

O watcher by the riverside!

The waves have borne away their precious
freight.

Why scan so anxiously the coming tide?

His promises forever must abide—

In patience wait!

Alas! we cannot comprehend His ways,

His purposes no mortal may discern;

O faithful heart that fears but yet obeys,

No longer doubt! For “after many days”

It shall return!

HARD TO SUIT

“If he’d only knelt at my feet,

And felt what he tried to say,

Instead of keeping his seat

In such a commonplace way,

Had his words been warm as sweet,

I might not have said him ‘nay’!

“If he had simply said: ‘Please,
Will you marry me?’ to-day—
And not gone down on his knees
In that ridiculous way,
I’d have felt much more at ease
And I might have answered: ‘yea’!”

WIRELESS

A fair thought came floating into my brain
On some ethereal current drifting.
For days I had searched for her, in vain,
But now the veil of consciousness lifting,
The thought said, smiling: “You’ve sought me
long,
Now paint me quickly in colors of song
Iris-hued, shifting,
Your phrases sifting.”

Idly I answered, “Some fortunate day
When the light and my mood are better!”
But, at last, to a magazine far away
I sent my new thought, in a letter,
Painted as carefully as I could;
E’en my enemy critic said it was good.
The daily I bought
And there—was my thought!

AFTER THE SEASON

Close the book we've read together
In the golden, summer weather!
Birds have sought another nest
 In some sunny, southern nook.
You will leave me like the rest,
 Close the book!

Sing no more the ballads tender,
All their love and longing render
My deep pain more bitter yet;
 Since my daring dream is o'er
Help me, dearest, to forget!
 Sing no more!

Say good-bye while I am ready.
See! my hand is not unsteady.
Would you dream that as I stand
 I had watched my future die?
While my voice I still command
 Say: "Good-bye!"

You will stay no more to listen
While above the white stars glisten
Like the bliss I could not capture.
 Tears, love? What is it you say?
After agony comes rapture!
 "You will stay?"

SONG

I'd weave thee a crown!
O Love! Who crownest my days;
Not the victor's laurel, the poet's bays;
They are not for thee.
Thy crown shall be
Something fairer and finer far,
Like the magical light that crowns a star.

I'd weave thee a crown!
Not a fading wreath of flowers;
Such a garland's only for summer hours;
And thy diadem
Shall not, like them,
Perish as brightest blossoms must;
An immortal crown I'd weave—not dust!

I'd weave thee a crown
Out of ev'ry loving thought
For others, that thy love for me has taught,
Out of happiness
That longs to bless
Earth's weary ones less glad than we—
Such is the crown, dear Love, I'd weave for thee!

A FACE

I know a face, serene and fair,
Crowned by its burnished braids of hair,
Lighted with eyes deep, lustrous, rare.

A face where every gazer must
Discern a soul, true, gentle, just,
A smile that Doubt himself might trust.

But a lovelier look I see
Than all its sweet serenity—
A look that's only known to me.

Like one who travels thru the night,
Ascends some eastward-looking height
And sees beyond the breaking light,

The slumbering world below him lies;
For him alone flush morn's fair skies;
So, when I gaze in those clear eyes

I see there what no other may,
Young Love's first faintly-dawning ray,
And well content I wait the day!

LOVE'S LOGIC

Love has its own sweet will and own sweet way
Of settling questions in an ex cathedra fashion.
And so, my dove-eyed darling, you may say
Just what you please, you cannot shake my pas-
sion.

Hush, cynic! my devotion's far above
All "admiration only for a season,"
And if you "see no reason for my love"—
Why, then—I'll love you still without a reason!

IN PRAISE OF PAIN

A sombre figure, darkly veiled, and dread
Walked ever at my side thru weary years—
Her food—my very heart! Her drink—my
tears!

At last, the veil was lifted from her head—
I dared not look! But vanquishing my fears
After a little, raised my timid gaze:

.

"And so thou art an Angel?" low I said
While two clear, tender eyes were fixed on mine,
And in their radiant depths I, wondering, read
A dear reflection of the Love Divine,
And since that day—God's angel, Pain, I praise!

TRAUMEREI

Over the listening audience
The soft, low notes of Traumerei swept,
I closed my eyes; to a single sense
I gave my soul; to the strains that crept
Into my heart, where memory waked and wept!

No longer I saw the white round arm
Of the fair girl clasp her violin;
I yielded to dreamy music's charm
And living again the days that had been
I pictured a face that had power to win

My thoughts to the unforgotten past!
Just once to touch the tempting red
Of the smiling mouth, to feel at last
Its sweet surrender—"Ah, me!" I said,
"To press to my heart that golden head

"I would give the life that remains to me!"
For a moment—the sweet sounds softer fell
For a moment—my weary soul was free,
The beautiful eyes I had known so well
Once again wrought woe with their fatal spell.

A warm sea of melody 'round us stole
The full, rosy lips were pressed to mine;
Into dangerous slumber my drowning soul
Wooed by kisses and music's wine
Wavering fell—and then, so faint and fine—

The music climbed by a silver stair
From the marshes low to a mountain height—
I felt a swift rush of diviner air,
The breath of pine forests; I saw the white
Snows of the summits—and the path of Right!

SONGS FROM HEINE

THE PALM AND THE PINE

A Pine-tree is standing lonely
On heights where the North-winds blow,
His slumber is covered only
With a cold, white robe of snow.

Of a Palm-tree he is dreaming
That, far in the Morning-land,
Grieves alone amid the gleaming
Desert of burning sand.

“DU BIST WIE EINE BLUME”

Thou art so like a flower
So sweet, and pure, and fair!
My heart perceives thy power,
Grief glides in unaware.

Oh, let my hands, caressing,
Fall on thy clustering hair!
God keep thee by His blessing
So pure and sweet and fair.

Softly now the sweet bells ring,
Set my pulses bounding!
Fly forth, little song of Spring,
Thru the wide world sounding.

Fly forth, little song, with speed
Where the flowers are meeting;
When you find a Rose indeed
Say I send her greeting!

“IM WUNDERSCHONEN MONAT MAI”

In the marvelous month of May
With all the buds unfolding,
Shall I take the miser's way
My heart's one rose withholding?

In the marvelous month of May,
Song-birds the branches thronging,
And I dare confess to-day
My hidden love and longing.

MISCONCEPTION

Around us rolls the sea—
And islands we!
Each soul, alone, alone,
Hears the strange monotone
Terrible, tortured moan
From the mysterious sea.

Sometimes, an island near
Grows strangely dear;
Yet, between sundered souls
The stern wave forever rolls;
Call across reefs and shoals—
Will any the faint cry hear?

Ah, friend! the sea is wide
We live beside!
Winds bear our words away,
Drown them in bitter spray;
Oh, waste of waters gray!
Oh, treacherous tide!

SONG

“Lily-bud, lily-bud, open be.
Let me your golden treasure see.
Open your glowing heart to me!

“Lily-bud, lily-bud, all afloat
On silver sea a silver boat
So you will sail this moonlit moat.”

But the sweet lily-bud better knows
Than her gold treasure to disclose.
When hearts' doors open—enter woes!

LOST

Pray can you tell me, little maid,
Of dimpled chin and cheek,
Where is my heart? lost or mislaid
For it in vain I seek.

I'm in a very heartless state
Inclined to think, my dear,
You stole the article—too late
The case is crystal clear!

But since the dreadful deed is done
I'll yield my claim to you.
If 'twas worth stealing, little one,
Is't not worth keeping, too?

LOVE HAS WINGS

“Love has wings!”
The cynic sings,
Deeming it a truth that stings!

Prophet grim
With vision dim,
All true lovers pity him!

Let him sing,
Poor jealous thing,
Whom love flits by on rosy wing.

Love can fly,
And that's just why
He lifts us upward to the sky.

He has power
To make each hour
Blossom like a tropic flower.

What matters, then,
That swift years ten
Have vanished somewhere beyond ken?

What care we
Tho' brief they be?
Love pledges us: “Eternity.”

Bliss he brings
And softly sings :
“Rejoice that Time and Love have wings!”

MY PRETTY GIRL

All sweet unconsciousness—
This pretty girl o' mine!
Yet would one wish that less
Which makes her half divine?
For like some silent star
Shining from skies afar,
Not dreaming that its light
Subdues the sombre night,
My love knows not how fair she is;
But dare I tell her this?
Dare I whisper in her ear:
“How pretty you are, my dear!
My star!
My dear, how pretty you are!”

GOOD-NIGHT

Good-night! those simple words that fall
So often from our careless lips—
And yet they hold a charm for all;
Our dream into the future dips
Finding a fair land of delight—
Good-night!

How softly is the “good-night” said
Some summer eve of joyous June!
Low droops the maiden’s rose-crowned head;
“Good-night—but must you go so soon?”
Oh, golden hour! Oh, love’s delight!
Good-night!

We say good-night to little ones
Whose trustful eyes have tired grown;
Ah, dimpled daughters! darling sons!
How tender is the wistful tone
That wishes all your future bright!
Good-night!

Then, faintly breathed, the last “Good-night”
That comes before the dreamless sleep;
It falls upon us like the blight
Of cruel frost. Alone we weep
For vanished loves and lost delight.
Good-night!

Courage! dear heart, the day is brief—
Soon to us comes an evening hour
In which we say "Good-night" to grief,
And threatening clouds no longer lower.
All glorious is the sunset's light!
Good-night!

"YET A LITTLE WHILE"

A little way they wander, O my friend,
The loved who leave us lonely sad at heart.
Tears blind our eyes; we cannot comprehend.
The gates are closed and it is hard to part;
We learn life's lessons slowly—but one day
We come at last to understand
The Heavenly Father's House is near at hand
And our beloved are not so far away!

Dear friend, be comforted—a little while—
"Slow is the step of sorrow-laden years?"
I know, I know. But still the loving smile,
The tender words of Christ rebuke our tears.
"A little while," and tired feet shall cross
The welcome threshold of that mansion blest
Where never enter sorrow—labor—loss,
But wait reunion—peace and home and rest!
Easter, April 4, 1885.

HIS CHOICE

Blue eyes! dewy eyes!
Dreamy and deep;
Waking a lover's sighs,
Oh, never may you weep!

Brown eyes! trustful eyes!
Tender and true;
May fairest visions rise
Dear brown eyes for you!

Hazel eyes! clear eyes!
Changeful and bright.
Oh, may thy shifting dyes
Ne'er lose their light!

Black eyes! brilliant eyes!
Filled full of fire;
Soon may you gain the prize
To which you aspire!

"Which do I love the best?"
Well—let me see—
Just set your mind at rest—
Those that smile on me!

AN OLD-FASHIONED SONG

Sweetheart, sweetheart! the Spring is coming!
Hear the swift rush of swollen streams.
Lax lies Winter's hand, long benumbing
The frightened Earth into frozen dreams.

Sweetheart, sweetheart! the world's awaking,
E'en when asleep, it dreamed of May,
Ferns and flowers out of silver making
Daisies of snow on the crystal spray.

The faithful Earth, the frost defying,
Ne'er forgets its favorites fled;
Its dainty darlings low are lying.
From the forest's cheek has flown the red—

Still, the bare brown boughs adorning
A mimic foliage of frost
Sparkles proof on a sunny morning
That the soul of Beauty's never lost.

Sweetheart, sweetheart! the earth's reviving
For Hope and Memory, hand in hand,
Face the future with smiles surviving
The somber storms that have swept the land.

A soft South breeze my cheek's caressing;
A pioneer blue-bird bravely sings;
The lavish sun a golden blessing
Down to the suppliant meadows flings.

Sweetheart, sweetheart! the brimming river
Is a symbol of my heart to me,
Full of gratitude to the Giver
Of Spring, songs and sunshine, Love and—
thee!

THE FISH-WIFE'S SONG

My fisher lad! My fisher lad!
Now sailing on the sea,
My heart is sad, my heart is sad,
When thou art far from me.

The wild waves moan, the wild waves moan
Upon the sullen sea.
I sit alone, I sit alone,
And wait for night and thee.

'Tis hard to part, 'tis hard to part,
When one sails out to sea!
Come home, sweetheart, come home, sweet-
heart,
Come back to love and me!

THE LETTERS OF HEINE

The paper quivers with a painful life—
Pulsating agony in every line!
And is this all, O Heine? We divine
A deeper purpose than a blind, sad strife
With fate and God. We find these letters rife
With passionate derision—yet they shine
With love of liberty, and clear and fine
Ever a noble scorn, like a keen knife
Cuts thru pretense and pompous ignorance.
And tho a casual and careless glance
Marks but the scoffer's cynic mask and sighs
Over a wasted mind and blighted heart;
To more discerning, sympathetic eyes
One of Truth's sharpest scimitars thou art!

.

“The light that never was on land or sea”—
Once said my darling thoughtfully,
“I wonder, love, what that light may be?”
I mused with my head upon my hand:
“The light that was never on sea or land?
Is it light that dwells in dawn's clear skies?
Or the solemn light when the stars arise?
Just then my darling looked up at me,
And I vowed to her as I bent the knee,
“ 'Tis the light of my darling's eyes!”

PATIENCE

God's angel Patience walks with folded wings
And tender eyes whose tears are never shed;
Her hands too busy doing little things
To leave their labor even to lift in prayer.
Fulfilling quietly each common care
O'er suffering sin she bends her haloed head.

Rarely she rests over her task undone,
Night's prison doors her trustful touch unbars;
No weary watch for the unrisen sun
Is hers; she does not lift her longing eyes
Toward tardy glories of the Eastern skies,
But dreams of dawn and works on 'neath the
stars.

.

Let us light our lips with music and mirth
And say farewell to sorrow!
For the night of grief, like the eve of earth,
Hath ever its fair to-morrow!
"Night, child, is dark, and winter is chill!"
All this, oh, life, I know,
But dark its diamond stars hath still,
Winter its pearls of snow!

CARPE DIEM

Hours that flit so fast away,
Stay, oh, stay!
Heed my cry! My arms, extending,
Would fix here your journey's ending.
Feet, forever forward wending,
Why must hurried steps obey

Voices of on-rushing years?
While my tears
Mark my grief, repentance, longing,
To live o'er the life I'm wronging?
From swift hours, the threshold thronging
Stern response my spirit hears:

"Heedless heart! Hadst thou thy will
Wouldst thou fill
With unselfish deeds, pure pleasure,
Earnest work, each moment's measure?
He who has not used time's treasure
Added wealth would squander still."

A PRAYER

Hovering over a city asleep
Forgetting its toil and care,
Soothing to slumber eyes that weep—
An angel heard this prayer :

“O Father, I have sinned; how dare I say
Only in thought to Thee, Most Holy One?
What matters it whether the deed was done
Or only dreamed in a half-hearted way?
Sin is still sin, and I have fallen so low
I hardly dare lift tear-filled eyes to Thee,
Petitioning for pardon, for I know
All that I might have been and hope to be.
Great as the sin I find my punishment,
Forevermore my fair ideal stands
Among the dews and dawns of loftier lands
Than this, wherein I've dared to be content.
Bitter it is, O Father, to recall
Days when I even dreamed I might
Serve Thee, and send a little gleam of light
Across the dark world—darker by my fall.
A fall or failure—either one is crime
To the angel Opportunity's clear eyes;
Not to have done the best that in me lies—
Oh, self-indulgent soul, besmeared with slime,
Oh, instrument unfit for Thy great hand,
Am I—and shall I ask Thee to retain

The tool that failed Thee? To have lived in vain
Is sin; for none but cowards ever stand
And at life's golden thresholds hesitate;
Each great door on its mighty hinges stirs,
We turn aside among the revelers
And find it closed when we return too late!"

The voice was lost in sobs; the prayer was done.
The pitying Angel wondered as he went:
"And yet, this broken-hearted penitent
The City honors as her noblest son!"

DECEMBER DAYS

"Stay with us for a little longer! Stay,
O brief, bright day!
Delay thy going, O December sun,
Until our task is done."

But swiftly from the darkening skies
The last light dies,
And somber twilight, with relentless look,
Closes the unread book.

A lesson for our life's December days—
No moment stays!
May we not vainly mourn the setting sun
Because of work undone.

NIGHT IN WINTER

Desolate is the day.

I can hear the horses' feet
Slipping on the icy street
As they cower along their way
Stung by the cruel sleet.

Oh, cold and gray the sky!
The clouds are sullen and drear
And hasten as if with fear;
Along the wet hills they fly
And follow the flying year.

Just a moment the sun
Looks forth, but his face is chill
And he drops behind the hill
As if with the day that is done
He, too, were forever still.

I cannot bear the night!
So silent—save for the beat
Of raw and remorseless sleet
That covers the boughs with white
And mocks the spring-blossoms sweet.

Oh, for a night of peace!
I long not for bliss—but rest;
And the storm within my breast
With the winter will not cease,
Nor flown joy rebuild its nest.

NATURE

A laughing, dimpled face I see:
“Golden-haired Goddess! smile on me!”
On bended knee I humbly sue
One gentle beam from eyes of blue;
Gayly and gracefully she bends
Her fair head; her white hand extends
Instead of the faint joy I seek—
I feel her kiss upon my cheek!

A black-browed Goddess, frowningly
Fixes her angry eyes on me;
A dusky mantle hides the charms
Of polished shoulders, perfect arms;
A sombre shape! She lifts her hand
In a stern gesture of command;
And when I, trembling, ask her name,
Behold it is the very same!

WINTER MORNING

Thru snow-covered branches
A golden light glows;
And flush the far hill-sides
With faint hints of rose;
From quaint gabled chimneys
Smoke slowly uncurls;
From rose-bush and brier
Flash rubies and pearls.

The sun rises in splendor,
Displacing the dawn,
Its tints tame and tender
In deeper hues drawn.
The icicles crystal
Like lances of light
Shine out in the sunbeams
With radiance white.

Oh, beautiful morning
Which blesses our eyes!
Oh, bounteous sunlight,
Eternal surprise,
We welcome with rapture!
Your tremulous ray,
Transfigures to pastime
The duties of day!

“LE ROI EST MORT—VIVE LE ROI!”

O waning sunset in the western sky,
I mourn no more that days must die
Howsoe'er perfect they may be—
Each leaves behind a lovely prophecy
Of fairer future years for you and me.

Better for both of us the opening year;
It lies before us—fair, untarnished, clear,
No blot upon its beauty yet—we may
By brave endeavor keep the stains away
That make regret part of the passing day.

And so farewell to all the imperfect past!
Thanks to the Giver of all Good, at last,
A year's mistakes and errors have past by.
Under the promise of a purer sky
Let us no longer mourn that days must die!
January 1, 1887.

MARCH

What is your message, O month of storm?

Mother of mighty winds that wail
About the houses where safe and warm

Wide-eyed children listen to sleet and hail
Beating on roof and window-pane,
Or the sudden downward dash of rain.

And then, again, speaks a velvet voice—

A Day comes stealing up from the South,
Into our hearts which she bids rejoice

Pansies her eyes and a rose her mouth,
Her robe of azure with sunlight laced
A girdle of violets 'round her waist.

And we cry in wonder: "Where is March?"

Only to see her veiled with rain
Falling, anew, from the sky's dim arch!

For the golden maiden we seek in vain,
Our Day fled far to the Southern land
Whence April shall lead her by the hand.

APRIL

Light of heart is the world! the clover
Wakens with joy from her wintry dreams,
A happy life rushes, and shouts, and gleams
In the glad free song of unshackled streams.
The bird sings his gratitude over and over!
Bright April days!

Busy, brown bees hurry and hover
Over the earliest blossoming;
What subtle fragrance the swift airs bring!
But I, alone, have no heart to sing.
My spirit's secret unrest can you discover,
Blithe April days?

ANEMONES

Once, as I walked in a vernal hour,
Where anemones fringed the way,
Up sprang in my heart a tiny flower,
As fair, and tender, and frail as they.

The rain and sunshine of rolling years
Bring back blossoms to grove and glen;
But, ah! what April of smiles and tears
Can ever make dead dreams bloom again?

Low whispers Nature: "Never the old
Anemones may star the sod!
Let fresh hopes and new flowers unfold
In sunlight of spring and the smile of God!"

VIOLET

Blue-eyed blossom! beguiling
My lips into singing
Your praises, half smiling
At the thought I am bringing
A story you've heard
Until it must tire!
Yet, does ever the bird
Stop his song to enquire
How many before him
Have sung the same strain?
With summer skies o'er him
Does he ever complain
Because buds are many they blossom in vain?

So, with the rest, I'll venture to forget
My praise is nothing new, fair vestal Violet!

TRAILING ARBUTUS

Pink-cheeked little daughter
Of the May!
The South-Wind has sought her
All the way
From the lands where languid lilies sway
Dreamily thruout the drowsy day,

Leaving tropic splendor,
Flying fleet,
Till wood-mosses tender
Touch his feet
And the Arbutus-blossoms shy and sweet
With a blush and smile his coming greet!

APPLE BLOSSOMS

A gnarled old apple-tree the winter long
Has stood with sullen seeming, hoary, grim,
Like vanquished veteran brooding o'er his wrong;
But see! the soft-voiced Spring has flattered him
Into the fond belief that he is young and fair!
And so he diadems his ancient forehead dim,
With fragrant, rosy crown she coaxes him to wear.

A DAY OF DREAMS

Dearest of autumn days,
Thou'rt only made for dreaming!
Thru perfect, purple haze
Are sun-kissed maples gleaming;
Clear cascades, downward streaming,
Lose half their restless seeming,
And the spray more softly sways.

Ev'ry sunbeam's a smile,
With tender meaning freighted;
And the wide Earth the while—
Tho soon to snow-drifts fated—
Looks just as if she waited
Glad news, with heart elated,
From some far, fortunate isle.

So lovely nature seems,
No blot its beauty staining;
Soft haze and golden gleams
My humbled heart restraining,
Hush all of its complaining,
And leave no wish remaining
For a fairer day of dreams.
1880.

SEPTEMBER SONG

In her brown robe gaily bordered
With gold and scarlet leaves embroidered
Sweet September stands
With extended hands.

Days to dream of and remember
Are these bright hours of September
As she casts her gold
To those beggars bold,

The ragged roadside weeds and bushes,
Till the poorest of them pushes
A resplendent crown
Thru its leaves of brown.

Ripe fruit, grain in generous measure
Scattered at September's pleasure
In vineyard, orchard, field,
Stores of gladness yield.

Grant a grace to good September!
Long her lavish gifts remember,
Let her bounty cheer
The remaining year!

OCTOBER

Oh, this glad October day!
Curious sunbeams softly swing
Into spots long hid away
Under thickets blossoming.

Not a leaf stirs—save to fall
Noiselessly upon the ground.
Out from grasses brown and tall
Not a rustle—not a sound.

And the day, its sky serene,
Its rich fruitage and its rest,
Golden light and stillness, mean
Hearts are mute when happiest!

A ROSE

I

The gates of the morning
Flung open disclose
A garden all glowing
Where groweth a rose.

II

The dawn's dewy rosebud
At noon doth unfold,
And shows its heart's secret
Of scarlet and gold.

III

Red petals lie scattered
Along Western skies—
Its brief life is blossomed—
The Day flower dies!

SONG

Little brown leaf, why flit so fast
Like a frightened child before the blast?
Stay your swift flight and drop to rest
A moment upon the mother's breast!

Here is a cradle fit for kings!
The soft-voiced pine forest ever sings,
Most musically, lullabies,
Wooing to slumber the weary eyes.

The cover is a gorgeous one,
Silver lace, by busy spiders spun;
Across the gold and crimson leaves
With sunbeam shuttle the Summer weaves.

Jack Frost, the dyer, used his store
Of hues to make richer than e'er before;
Little leaf—you must rest at last
Somewhere—then, why do you flit so fast?

THANKSGIVING

I

In the garden of days,
Is one all men praise!
"What are its hours?"
Bunches of flowers!
For the minutes are roses!

"Would that I could crush their sweetness
Into some deed of rich completeness!"
Thy wish but discloses
Impatience of mood,
For all that is good

Grows slowly, without observation.
Unhurried the steps of Creation!
Be content to obey
The laws of right living
And every day
Will be one of Thanksgiving!

II

When the wan earth warms her fingers cold
At the sunset's dying embers;
When bare trees shiver, and winds are bold
Gorged with the forest's wealth of gold;
What comfort is sad November's?

Of the glad year is November king!
Since love is the best part of living,
To the dear home-feast the heart must cling;
Let memory and affection sing
The happiness of Thanksgiving.

What matter tho winds are chill and drear
As we gratefully remember
Joyous reunions and household cheer?
For the golden, glowing heart of the year
Beats in the breast of November!
1894.

WINTER

“A white, white world!” I said.
“A ghostly world and dead.
Where are the flowers fled?”

“Gloomy and gray the sky,
Drear night is drawing nigh,
The breeze is but a sigh.

“Above its fallen leaves
The lonely forest grieves,
No peace my pain reprieves.

“More sad than ever grows
The memory of a rose
Buried beneath the snows.”

Weary, I bowed my head.
"Ghost of life's gladness dead
Why haunt my heart?" I said.

"Souls of dead dreams once mine
Frosts' phantom flowers shine
Cold, cruel, crystalline!

"But see! beyond the cold,
Grown in a garden gold,
A heavenly rose unfold!

"Over the flushing snows
Glorious color glows
Vision of vanished rose!

"O wondrous world!" I cried.
"Transfigured, glorified,
Better than bliss denied!"

Sweet was the sense of rest,
Humbly my heart confessed
That even loss is best.

When from my longing eyes
Vanish the sunset skies
Shall the still stars arise.

"Better than love's rose dead;
Dreams of ambition fled;
Is sweet content!" I said.

A CHRISTMAS SONG

The cheer of Christmas fills the air.
Courage! kind hearts are everywhere
Shining from faces worn with care.

Toil-hardened hands love-laden are
With gifts for children. Fair and far
O'er sad hearts rises Bethlehem's star.

The restless feet that fill the way
With eager music, seem to say:
"How rich in love is Christmas Day!"

This is the glad hour's highest good,
The bond of helpful brotherhood
By many dimly understood.

Moved by its impulse, none the less
The selfish give, and learn to bless
The season of unselfishness!

Listen! the birthday song again!
An angel chorus, sweet as when
Proclaiming: "Peace—good will to men!"

CHRISTMAS

Is it well with the world?
The snow lieth deep
And the rose is asleep
In its winter-robe curled.
All tucked out of sight
Under down soft and white.
It is well with the world!

Is it well with the heart?
Defying the snow
The heart is aglow,
For one day it is part
Of Humanity's stream;
Nor is love but a dream
For it beats in each heart.

Is it well with the world?
Let children reply!
Hear the rapturous cry.
War's fierce flag is furled,
Peace crowns Love as king—
And at Christmas we sing:
It is well with the world!

AS A LITTLE CHILD

Matt. XVIII, 2-10

“His little ones!” ah, how dare we
Treat with less reverence than He
These fragile blossoms of humanity?

O, may we nevermore offend
His little ones, but show unto the end
A faint reflection of the Perfect Friend.

The friend of sinners. We adore
The spotless robe of purity He wore
And yet His sternest words were: “Sin no more!”

Since Christ did not condemn, can we
Cast the first stone of censure when we see
How “spotted from the world” our garments be?

Oh, blind eyes! Cruel hearts of stone
Hear our rebuke in that deep tender tone
That could come from the lips of love alone!

“Take heed that ye do not despise
These little ones whose angel eyes
Behold my Father’s face in Paradise!”

“A lesson of humility?”
Not so! We may be proud to be
As little children welcomed tenderly!

FIDES EST FORTIS

When day was young I sought the studio
Of a great artist. "Paint me Faith!" I cried,
"Faith clinging to the cross of Christ." "Not so.
Yet I will paint her for thee," he replied.
And from the dreams that dwell within his eyes
I saw a thought awake, and smiling rise.

And when I came again, behold! a face
Flashed white against a black cloud, strong and
stern,
No tearful, gentle, pleading look, no grace,
Yet those deep eyes into my being burn.
"Why is she sad and strong? Why must she
stand
Facing the dark with outstretched toil-worn
hand?"

"For Faith to know, mars her sublimity,
For Faith to cling, her courage. She is brave
And dares the dreadful depths of mystery,
And with a stern smile challenges the grave.
O'er her the shadow of the Cross is thrown
And by that symbol, she is not alone."

I looked again, and lo! a mighty cross
Grew on my sight from out the background dim,
The mystic sign of infinite love and loss.

“Is Grief Love’s shadow then? Do tears that
brim

Our eyes shut out the sunshine of His smile?”
“We learn it late—Faith felt it all the while.”

TO A PHARISEE

Looking down into the loathsome drain
I saw the sky,
And one pure star in its purple plain
Shone still and high.
The star of peace that we’ve sought in vain
May near us lie!

May lurk, unseen, in some soul forgiv’n,
Patience awhile!
The penitent heart with anguish riven
Dare we call vile?
Look into it for a glimpse of Heaven
And Christ’s own smile!

KEATS

Unhappy poet! Greek born out of time!
As if the soul of sweet Anacreon
His sandals wet with England's dew, upon
Her chalky cliffs had sung an alien rhyme
With burning brain and heart unsatisfied.
We almost hear thy sobbing as we read
Until we long for power to still thy need
And grant thee all the bliss stern life denied;
As an Æolian harp in cypress shade
By viewless hands of zephyr softly played,
Storms break the slender strings and so release
A mightier music—tortured soul of sound!
Life was thy Lamia, Keats; hast thou not found
In arms of kinder Death, rest, love and peace?

STAR-LIGHT

And stars shall rise when day is done.
Shall we, then, mourn the sunken sun?
The stars are suns! Uplift your eyes
To the still splendor of the skies.
'Tis God's great answer to our pain:
"Unrest and longing are in vain;
Be patient, sad and shadowed hearts,
When joy's bold radiance departs;
And ever, as the sunshine dies,
Soft twilight comes, and stars shall rise!"

WITH US STILL

Alone—and yet not so!

Sweet Nature's face

Peeps into every room. A whisper low

Breathes through the leaves about the quiet
place

And I am not alone. Ah, no! Ah, no!

And gentle voices break

Upon my ears;

My listening, longing soul at once awake,

The music of their loving message hears

And all my heart is glad for their dear sake.

“The loved and gone?” Not so!

The loved and—here.

I almost catch their breathing soft and low,

The rustle of their robes—they are so near!

I long to hold their hands nor let them go!

NOT AS I WILL

Not as I will, O Father! Should I choose,

Never a cloud might cross my summer sky;

I might forget the need of cooling dews

And all my cherished flowers might fade and die

Lacking the largesse of adversity.

Not as I will. I would not dare direct
My destiny one brief December day.
Whether it be Thy pleasure to protect
My life from pain, or not, help me to say,
“Not as I will.” And may I ever pray
Tho sorrows’ sword be driven to the hilt
Within my heart, “Dear Father, as Thou wilt.”

AT THE THRESHOLD

Oh, golden days of childhood! I look back
Upon you as upon some perfumed Spring
When each new day a new delight doth bring
As simple, fresh and sweet as violets are,
Or flowering grass with its one silver star.
No element of loveliness you lack
Departed days!

I could not, if I would, your peace o'erpraise.
Joys came like wild-birds welcome tho unsought,
And all that made my waking life so worth
The living, was the bright, unspoken thought,
“I have a father in heaven and one on earth.”

Oh, untried years before me! I look out
Upon you thru a melancholy mist,
The landscape lost in mystery, nor kissed
By any beam of hope; the tenderness
Which sorrow may conceal, I only guess

But cannot see, and groping forth in doubt
"My God," I pray,

"Hold thou my hand along the lonely way
Where only frost-flowers grow on hedges white."
For just as I had learned its priceless worth
A light was quenched that left me in the night—
I have two fathers in heaven and none on earth.

TURGUENIEFF

O mountain spirit of our level age!
O master of the matchless skill
Which bends emotion to thy will
And firmly fixes on poetic page
Pictures of life that wake an answering thrill.

O grand and mighty voice! How have we dared
Assume that we could comprehend
The heart that held humanity its friend,
And in its desperate endeavor shared,
Pitying, forgiving, loving to the end.

Ingratitude thy royal spirit tried,
Thy guerdon was an exile's grave
For service so sincere and brave.
No lance of light the darkness doth divide.
Savior of serfs, thyself thou couldst not save!

When Germany forgot her giant debt
To gifted souls, and granted grace
To the base prejudice of race—
A great heart broke that might be beating yet,
And who can fill Auerbach's empty place?

So Russia shows her gratitude to thee!
Her noblest, dying in a distant land;
And yet, what empty honor from her hand
Is worth thy fame, which evermore shall be
The guiding star of Freedom's gallant band?

Turguenieff! myriad hearts are thine
In the New World, and proud to own
Allegiance to a lord who rules alone
By royal manhood's right divine;
Love is thy sceptre, truth thy crystal throne!

“AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN”

I

Dark were the days of old, dark as if God had
forgotten
The world He had made and all His suffering
children.
Life was a riddle unread and the gloomy grave
was no answer,
Life meant loneliness then, and Love unsatisfied
longing.

II

Dawned from the darkness at last the light of a
new revelation
Mighty, yet tender and true as the Master who
made it immortal.
Lingered the light, and lay along the path of the
ages,
Uncertainly followed at first, but soon the foot-
steps grow firmer ;
Now the broadening beams are disclosing the
bounteous harvests,
Showing the beauty of earth, dear pledge of the
beauty of heaven,
Touching with tender tints the hills on the West-
ern horizon,
Beautiful hills of hope from whose unattained
summits
Unseen slopes will lead down, when we shall have
reached them
Into a land of love and the fair fields of fulfill-
ment.

DRÜBEN AM WIESENRAND

*Translated from a poem by an unknown Austrian
Soldier*

Far on the meadow land—
Two daws are hiding—
Shall I fall on Danube's strand,
Or in Poland riding?
What matters where my grave?
E'er they shall free my soul
I'll fight like soldier brave!

There on the furrowed field
Two ravens are crying—
Shall I be first to yield
Fallen and dying?
What is the difference?
Thousands and thousands ride
In Austria's defence!

Right across the sunset-red
Two crows are flying—
When comes the Reaper dread?
Scythe there's no denying?
What matters it to me?
Our banners wave and sweep
On to Belgrade, I see!

1915.

SONG

A nightingale fell in love with a star
Reflected down in the deep water—
A wandering bard's my fortunes are
And I love the Sultan's daughter.

As I sang in the Sultan's court one day
His daughter dropped me a flower
In a half-caressing, half-careless way
That chained me with magic power.

The Sultan's daughter's eyes are dark
But sunny and bright her tresses,
Her smile in a ray of sunshine, mark!
And whatever it falls on blesses.

The songster could not fly up to the sky
Nor the star drop down from heaven.
But he sang his songs to her (that's why
The nightingales sing at even).

The bird did not dream to wed the star
But sang every night by the water,
So I will worship and sing from afar
Unseen by the Sultan's daughter.

Written at the age of eight years.

LARAMIE

In the arms of the hills
Storms threaten in vain,
Lies loveliest Laramie,
Pearl of the plain.

If she looks to the east
A breastwork of hills;
West—the Medicine Bow
Guards her from ills.

Her namesake—the river—
Has gladdened with grain
The Gem of the Rockies,
Pearl of the plain!

May brightest skies ever
Above her head bend;
No storm of misfortune
Upon her descend!

And we—all who love her—
Rejoice in each gain
That waits lovely Laramie,
Pearl of the plain!

CAMP AT LAKE MOUNTAIN

We sang along the mountain road
That thru the light and shadows flowed,
While down the slope forever strode
Endless processions of the pine.
Above, the sky's resplendent shine,
Around, the whisper: "You are mine!

"Neglected long—misunderstood—
Nature would teach you all things good,
Learn the deep lore of lake and wood."
Wider grew our horizon lines;
The mountains sentinelled with pines
Showed barren spurs, all scarred by mines.

Then little parks with vivid grass;
Over them light and shadow pass
In noiseless flight. The frowning mass
Of sombre forest, granite wall,
They do not seem to fear at all!
The baby brooks laugh as they fall.

Then up again, with merry song
Carrying as they dance along
Grains of gold—yet unstained by wrong.
Why should these shining flecks cause strife
Or ever curse a human life
With avarice? The wood is rife

With treasures beautiful as they!
The emerald moss along the way
And ruby berries on the spray.
Why should we e'en remember care?
Breathing this vital mountain air
The soul finds perfect freedom where

Great nature builds a house for her
With stately columns of the fir
And arabesques of juniper.
Its echoing halls are vaster far
Than any trod by king or czar,
More richly carved. How tall they are!

We lie upon the mountain's breast
Watching the wonders of the west,
Importunate questions stilled to rest.
O life of freedom! Glad release
When all perplexing problems cease
And we drink a deeper draught of peace.

How lovely looks the world from here!
Unsightlinesses disappear,
Discordant sounds we cannot hear;
Just the sweet murmurs of the brook
Below in some fern-feathered nook,
The prattle of the pines. We look

Across the wide plains lying at our feet,
The summer air all shimmering with heat,
Find the far city fair—existence sweet.

The lavish largesse of the sunset spent,
We hastened home, at last, to fire and tent.
To peak and forest, night new magic lent.

The evening sky with unguessed splendors filled
Day's golden cup; its ruby wine had spilled
As if our royal host, the mountain, willed
To give our perfect day a close divine.
The forest darkened and we saw the shine
Of tangled stars in tresses of the pine.

O friends about that campfire! Still we hear
Each laugh and song and jest that echoed clear,
And still the firelight shines on faces dear!
Still thru the forest arches dark and grim
Floats the fearless spirit of some sweet old hymn
Of gratitude to God. Within the dim
Walls of the world that rise so gray and stern,
As in the fairy haunts of flowers and fern,
Campfires of friendship and of memory burn!

CAYUGA LAKE

Among the green hills
A summer nap taking
The lovely lake lies
Nor dreams of awaking.

She looks as she lies
Like Princess enchanted.
A hundred long years
To Morpheus granted!

From blue skies above
Star eyes without number
Gaze anxiously down
And guard her deep slumber.

Around her the hills
Their silent watch keeping
Grow weary at last
And they too are sleeping.

The Fairy Prince comes
As dawn the East flushes;
At kiss of the Sun
The lake wakes with blushes!

ON THE ST. JOHNS

Slowly we sail up the mystical river
Magic with moonlight, sombre with shade;
Stirred by the night wind the tall grasses shiver,
Of their own trembling shadows afraid!

And we find not one but three rivers flowing
In the dim midnight down to the sea.
Two of them dark, and one of gold showing
Where the steps of the silver moon shall be.

At our approach by the pathway golden
Sentinel cypress on either hand
Start out from the forest so weird and olden
Guarding the gate to a lovely land.

Shielding fair Florida! Shy forest maiden,
Blue-eyed lakes laughing thru moss-veiled pine;
Slender, sun-kissed fingers with flowers laden,
Have you room for homage? Here is mine!

MOUNTAIN TEACHING

I saw the Mountains lie
Like a bit of bluer sky

Along the horizon's rim
Dreamlike, distant and dim.

Hope, at their beauty, stirred
And whispered a soft, sweet word :

I thought, as I drew near :
"What an inspiration here !

"Like birds on sunlit wing
One's very thoughts must sing.

"What an impulse to poets' Art
When one lives in an opal's heart !

"Locked amid color and light
What could not the dullest write ?"

The mountains drew nearer still,
And they wrought their royal will.

White and serene and high,
Their foreheads touched the sky,

But their cheeks were scarred with tears
And the furrows of untold years.

Then the outlines of amethyst
Were shrouded in soft, gray mist.

I sit at the mountains' feet—
Their moods are many and sweet.

A new charm in every change.
But a silence deep and strange

Has touched my lips like a hand.
I begin to understand

The dark pines' plaintive tongue.
But my songs are not yet sung

Listening still to the psalm
Of the mountains grand and calm,

And Self has sought its nest
Hushed like a bird to rest.





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